

Opening Statement of Ranking Member Turner

“The State of FOIA: Assessing Agency Efforts to Meet FOIA Requirements”

**COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
Subcommittee on Information Policy, Census, and National Archives**

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing. I'd like to congratulate you on your first hearing as Chairman of this subcommittee, and I look forward to working with you over the months to come.

The FOIA statute has become popular tool of inquiry for the press, researchers, businesses, prisoners, attorneys, activists, and foreign interests. But it is also a tool for the individual. And given the public interest at stake, I think improving the procedural aspects of the Act is certainly a worthy goal.

Nevertheless, I hope we can continue to balance the need for open government with the need to protect information vital to national security and homeland security. And I hope we all keep in mind the importance of individual privacy throughout this discussion.

Today, I look forward to hearing from the Department of Justice on their efforts to implement the Executive Order, from the Government Accountability Office for a review of FOIA processing trends, and from the public interest groups, all of whom are passionate advocates for unfettered access to government records.

Again, thank you and congratulations Mr. Chairman.